



Orchard Ridge Elementary School | 5602 Russett Rd. | Madison, Wisconsin 53711 | 608-204-2320

Becky Kundert, Principal | orchardridge.mmsd.org

April 27, 2023

To Honorable Judge Peterson,

I am writing this letter in support of Isaiah Phillips. I would like to bring to your attention who Isaiah is beyond the very serious allegations he faces to be in your court. I have known Isaiah for nine years. Initially, I met him as I served as his elementary school Principal while he was a fourth grade scholar. As an elementary scholar, positive relationship and meaningful connection with his teachers and peers were essential for his success. He was always quick witted, verbally intelligent, thoughtful and caring. Developmentally, he like all elementary students, relied heavily on his strong family support system. At any point in time, his family was readily available to support him and help guide his decision making.

Over the years, I have maintained contact with Isaiah through his family connections as well as his help and support at school. School became more difficult for him as he transitioned across levels and particularly entering high school. As positive connection and relationship is critical for Isaiah, high school size and structure was not able to meet his needs socially, emotionally and academically. This past year, we have connected around establishing a plan to better himself and his future. He continues to grow and reflect, learning through mistakes- like all of us do.

In the nine years that I have known Isaiah, as an elementary student to the young man he is today, he is a sensitive, caring and kind soul. He has a strong support system that will continue to help guide him, be a place he can lean for help and ensure he learns from his mistakes. I am confident that he will learn from this experience and will not repeat it.

It is my sincere hope that you take this letter into consideration in support of Isaiah Phillips. Please let me know if I can be of further help.

Sincerely,

Becky Kundert

Orchard Ridge Elementary Principal



JP HAIR DESIGN, INC.

May 5, 2023

Dear Judge James D. Peterson,

My name is Jeff Patterson, I'm the owner of JP Hair Design Barbershop and a good friend of the Phillips family. I have also had the pleasure of coaching Isaiah Philips for a total of 7 years. Two years at the YMCA and 5 years at the Madison Memorial Youth Football program. I have known Isaiah since he was 7 or 8 years old. I met him as a client at JP Hair Design. Isaiah happened to be the same age as my son Jairus, so I recruited Isaiah to join the YMCA flag football team I coached. I coached Isaiah from second grade at the YMCA to the eighth grade at Madison Memorial youth football program. Isaiah was also part of our Kids Cleaning Crew working at the barber shop. His job was sweeping, cleaning, folding towels, and helping around the shop. So, this lets you know I have spent a lot of time with Isaiah.

During Isaiah days of playing football, he was very coachable, and a hard worker on the field. Isaiah looked forward to game days, I believe this gave him a reason to produce in the classroom. We had academic green cards for all players to complete to participate on game day. Isaiah was always eligible to play. Isaiah worked hard in the classroom to stay eligible to play because he looked forward to game day. Couple thing I know about Isaiah, he is a good young man, and I trust him. Isaiah has spent plenty nights at my house, he is very respectful, and he has good in his heart. Isaiah is also a man of faith. I'm not happy with his decisions he made a year ago, unfortunately, his environment sometime dictates his actions. He needs a fresh opportunity with fresh new friends, fresh new environment, and I am confident that Isaiah will make a change.

I look at a lot of situations in sports analogies. I'm hoping this is Isaiah's time-out where he can sit and reevaluate his actions and come out of this time out and make changes to be successful. I'm always willing to help Isaiah, and willing to give advice, I know he feel accountable to me. I would love to see Isaiah get an opportunity to remain in our community. I am confident that Isaiah will change his old strategies and environment that put him in a position. I have seen him grow on the football field, and I have confidence he will grow through this situation also.

Isaiah has a very supportive family; I know that Isaiah will be a successful young man.

Please contact me if you have any questions.

Sincerely,

Jeffrey Patterson
JP hair Design, Inc.
608-513-7173
Jphair584@cs.com

Gabrielle Phillips
5145 Whitcomb Dr,
Madison, WI 53711

April 25, 2023

RE: Isaiah Gregory Phillips

Honorable Judge James D. Peterson,

I am Gabrielle Phillips, and I am Isaiah's mother. I had Isaiah when I was 19 years old and beginning my second semester of school at Madison College. Still considered to be somewhat fresh out of high school, attending college, and not yet established in a career, we continued to live with my parents so that I could continue to have the support system that I needed as a single parent. I then had Isaiah's sister, Destiny four years later, which only reaffirmed the continued need of living with my parents.

Your Honor, I understand the severity of Isaiah's charges, so much so that throughout the course of this process, every day has been a mix of emotions. I know that Isaiah has been reduced to his charges, but that is not who he is and it's completely heartbreaking as a mother.

My pregnancy with Isaiah wasn't planned, but he was loved just as much, if not more. I was excited to see how this perfect little baby was going to grow up and take on the world. I also knew that I had to work twice as hard to ensure that Isaiah knew he could do whatever he put his mind to. Isaiah had hopes and dreams early on and that started with wanting to become a lawyer. Isaiah would go to daycare dressed in suits, carrying his laptop bag with his V-Tech laptop and manilla file folders. He would sit at a table in the middle of the room so that he was able to meet with his clients (other kids in his class) and he would certainly have a line of them waiting. This dream carried him through middle school, where he struggled to decide if he would go to Duke to play basketball while obtaining his law degree or if he should go straight to Harvard. While Isaiah is no longer the little boy who dresses in three-piece suits, he is a young man that continues to have hopes and dreams for himself.

Isaiah has always been curious, always asking questions to help him figure out the world around him and how he fits in, which was always a struggle for him. Not knowing his father impacted that greatly, but he continued to push himself. He has had to work hard to prove himself because he's had so many people who told him he couldn't. Thankfully, he has just as many, if not more people that believe in him and his ability to do something great.

While Isaiah's mental health has been an ongoing struggle for him, he continues to show a zest for life that leaves me feeling hopeful as his mother. He has made great strides for himself by getting his license and finding employment. He is still trying to figure out the best method for obtaining his diploma. Despite the circumstances, Isaiah continues to be the smart, fun, and

caring, person that I have always known him to be. This is also paired with his persistent effort to be better than the day before.

To say that our family would be devastated if Isaiah was incarcerated is an understatement. He is a young man with a lot of potential and continued family support. I pray for grace and mercy.

Thank you for your time,

Gabrielle

Carita A. Phillips
5145 Whitcomb Drive
Madison WI 53711

April 27, 2023

RE: Isaiah Gregory Phillips

Dear Judge Peterson,

My name is Carita Phillips. I am blessed to be Isaiah's maternal grandmother. Isaiah, his mother Gabrielle, and sister Destiny have lived with my husband Gregory, and me all his life.

I understand the seriousness of this matter and it breaks my heart that Isaiah is in this situation. It is no surprise that he has accepted responsibility for his actions. Contrary to what it may seem, he is not a street kid. Sometimes a good person makes a bad choice but that doesn't make them a bad person.

Although Isaiah struggles with anxiety, emotional trauma, and expressing his feelings at times, he is a loving and caring person with a big heart. He demonstrated this at a young age when his sister was born prematurely, and he continues to have a big heart for babies and loves to hold them. He is so kind and gentle with them. It brings joy to my heart to see the love and tenderness on his face when he holds a baby.

He is also a funny, creative, and a smart young man. When Isaiah was in elementary school, he liked to wear suits to school and carry a little briefcase. His dream was to become an attorney, or a police officer like his grandfather.

It is obvious to me that Isaiah is striving to be better and do better to make positive changes in his life. He recently received his driver's license and started a job.

Our family will be devastated, and I believe it will impact Isaiah negatively if he is incarcerated. He just turned 19. He is still so young with a lifetime ahead of him. It is my sincere hope the court will take this letter into consideration. Despite the charges, Isaiah is a good person with lots of potential. I pray he will be shown grace and mercy.

Sincerely,

Carita Phillips

Chief U.S. District Judge James D. Peterson
120 North Henry Street
Madison, WI 53203

RE: Isaiah G. Phillips (Case No. 0758 3:22CR112-03)

Chief U.S. District Judge Peterson,

My name is Gregory W. D. Phillips. I am a retired Wisconsin Department of Justice, Division of Criminal Investigation Senior Special Agent. I retired in December 2011 after spending over 27 years in law enforcement. I am the grandfather of Isaiah G. Phillips and by no means am I attempting get my grandson out of anything, but there are facts from my standpoint that may assist you. Your Honor, even though I am a retired Police Officer the oath I took to defend and protect the Constitution and follow the laws of the State of Wisconsin and the United States did not retire. I am keeping that in mind here.

I am writing to you, Your Honor, because I would like to give you further insight into Isaiah Phillips. My grandson and his mother, Gabrielle Phillips, have always lived with my wife (his grandmother) Carita Phillips and myself.

Isaiah has never been a bad kid, but he did have some behavioral problems, starting in grade school. Although Isaiah's mom had him in therapy in the past, he struggled to share what he was feeling, and he still has a hard time with it because he is an internal thinker. He keeps a lot inside, and when it boils over he doesn't know how to handle it.

Isaiah enjoyed played football and basketball until the end of his freshman year. He then started hanging out with some older guys and sports fell by the wayside. The pandemic solidified his lack of interest to return to school.

Your Honor, I know now that Isaiah smokes marijuana. However, incarcerating Isaiah does him no good. He just learns to be a criminal, and he doesn't get the help he really needs. Isaiah never really learned how to handle his emotions, and he has a high level of anxiety. From what I can see, he uses the marijuana to medicate and calm himself. I do not endorse or support that, but he has clearly found some direct benefits in using it when it comes to his mental health.

I am aware of Agent Suter's documentation of Isaiah's violation while on pretrial release. There were numerous violations for continued marijuana use. Your Honor, if Isaiah had control over his marijuana use, he wouldn't violate the no-use rule. He clearly does not have that control; that is addiction.

From my perspective, Isaiah needs help with his mental health, not incarceration. The U.S. probation agents and we his family have been trying to get him that help. It has not been easy. It never is. But he truly needs it.

I ask you to sentence him in a way that he can get and that he has to get that help, or face loss of freedom. He is still very young physically, and more so emotionally.

Thank you for considering my thoughts.

Respectfully.

Gregory W. D. Phillips